



The Kansas Economy: Steady Growth for the Long-Term

Like clockwork, for the past 19 months the Kansas Department of Labor has reported that more Kansans were working each month than the year before. That's 19 straight months of "over the year" job growth, and a clear sign of a growing Kansas economy. And it's not the only indication.

Over the past two years, Kansas families and businesses have earned more income, far exceeding the estimates made by professional economists. In fact, just for the past four months Kansas tax revenues have exceeded projections by more than \$100 million.

Although individual incomes have grown steadily, taxes from business income – the result of a growing economy and rising profits – have exceeded estimates by almost 50 percent for the past two years.

Stronger performance by Kansas businesses means more jobs for Kansas residents. September's unemployment rate stood at 4.9 percent, down a full half-point from the previous year.

And as a *Topeka Capital-Journal* editorial pointed out last week, Kansas job growth has come in the private sector, as government employment fell five percent in September, compared to a year ago.

This is all good news, but it hasn't happened by accident and we can't let up. Improving the Kansas economy depends investing in our future.

That's why we worked so hard over the past two years to make the best possible case for increasing the military presence in Kansas.

That work has paid off with the planned return of the Big Red One to Fort Riley, and the upcoming deployment of new units to McConnell Air Force Base, Forbes Field, and Fort Leavenworth. More than 13,000 military and civilian jobs are expected to come to Kansas as a result.

We're also looking to the future by working to sell more Kansas products in China, where I just returned from leading a major trade mission. China holds tremendous promise as a market for Kansas goods, and Kansas businesses are already doing more than \$200 million in business there. Selling more goods and services to China means more jobs here at home.

We must continue to plan ahead, make wise decisions, and keep up our investments in a well-educated workforce. If we can maintain our steady progress, Kansas will keep on producing more good jobs and will enjoy a stronger economy for years to come.